

FRENCH, DANIEL CHESTER

Drawer 21a

71. 2003. 085. 02778

Scullions-F

Statues of Abraham Lincoln

Daniel Chester French

Excerpts from newspapers and other
sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection



Lincoln. " \$2000 - (Gold)

Lincoln Memorial,
Washington,
D.C.

David C. French, Jr.

34" high
base 25" x 25"

from
Grand Central Art Galleries
15 Vanderbilt Ave N.Y. City.

DE WITT WARD,
PHOTOGRAPHER,
WASHINGTON NEWS,
NEW YORK CITY.

CHESTERWOOD

.....
A National Trust Historic Site

STOCKBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS



RON BLUNT

Chesterwood (1898), a place of great natural beauty, was the country estate of leading artist Daniel Chester French, whose public monuments helped define the nation's cultural landscape. The place where he created the seated *Abraham Lincoln* for the memorial in Washington, D.C., offers a compelling look at the meaning and methods of sculpture at the turn of the twentieth century. The house, elegantly furnished by French, and the studio, filled with his tools and models, are artfully set within the landscaped grounds designed by the sculptor. The Barn Gallery showcases a portion of what is probably the largest collection of work by any American sculptor.

National Trust for Historic Preservation

CHESTERWOOD

4 Williamsville Road | PO Box 827 | Stockbridge, MA 01262
413.298.3579 | Fax: 413.298.3973
Email: chesterwood@nthp.org | www.chesterwood.org

TOURS

Open May – Oct. daily 10 am – 5 pm.

Guided tours of the house and studio depart on the half-hour,
self-guided tours of gardens.

Admission charge.

Exhibit gallery, museum shop, picnic area.

Some of the site is accessible to persons with limited mobility.

Closed Nov.-Apr.

PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

Throughout the year, Chesterwood offers a variety of special events and programs, including antique car and carriage shows, bronze casting and marble carving demonstrations, an outdoor contemporary sculpture exhibition, and family activities exploring sculpture and architecture.

LOCATION

Two miles west of Stockbridge on rural Williamsville Rd. From Stockbridge, travel west on Route 102, turn left or south on Route 183. Three-quarters of a mile past the Norman Rockwell Museum, turn right onto Mohawk Lake Road and then left onto Willow Street which becomes Williamsville Road, an unpaved road just before Chesterwood.



Operated by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Chesterwood presents the life and achievements of Daniel Chester French and fosters public appreciation for sculpture and historic preservation. Recipient of the National Humanities Medal, the National Trust provides leadership, education, and advocacy to save America's historic places. Its historic sites, regional offices, and Washington, D.C. headquarters work with the Trust's quarter-million members and thousands of local community groups in all 50 states. For more information, visit www.nationaltrust.org or call 1.800.944.NTHP.

Revd. 7/2003

1850-1931

DANIEL CHESTER FRENCH:
Sculpting an American Vision

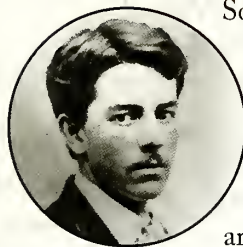


Daniel Chester French, 1913
ROBERT VONNOH (1858-1933)
Nicholas Witman, photographer

*D.C. French working on the full-size clay model
of The Milmore Memorial, 1891*

A.B. Bogart, photographer

The SCULPTOR and His LEGACY



DANIEL CHESTER
FRENCH, C.1871,
JUST AFTER HIS
FIRST FORMAL
ARTISTIC STUDY IN
NEW YORK CITY

Howard A. Richardson,
photographer,
Courtesy Library of Congress

DURING HIS LONG CAREER, Daniel Chester French created hundreds of works of art.

Some of his public sculpture, like *The Minute Man* and *Lincoln Memorial*, are among the nation's most treasured icons. Drawing on myth and history, French and his fellow artists enlivened the cities and towns of America with the symbols of their age. Working with architects, landscape planners, and craftsmen from the 1870s into the 1920s, they embodied in stone and bronze the exuberance and confidence of the nation and they fostered a shared vision for the future.

French grew up in a distinguished New England family that valued and nurtured his talent. Failing math and science in



Completed in 1898 by architect Henry Bacon, the Studio with its interior layout and resourceful innovations reflects French's artistry and ingenuity.

"I had been whittling and carving things from wood and gypsum, or even from turnips, as many boys do, and as usual the family thought the product remarkable."

DANIEL CHESTER FRENCH

college, French turned to his passion for sculpting and went into business modeling portraits and creating decorative figurines. Beginning in 1870, French pursued further artistic training in New York City and Italy. After he returned to Concord, MA, he built a studio adjacent to the family home in 1879. Within a decade he was one of the leading artists in the country.

By 1896, French was so successful that in addition to a large studio in New York City, he was able to establish a second studio and home in western Massachusetts. He and his family lived here in Stockbridge from May through October for the next thirty-six years. The sculptor died at Chesterwood in 1931 at the age of eighty-one, followed by his wife Mary Adams French in 1939 and their daughter Margaret in 1973.

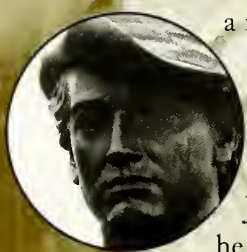


D.C. French's Concord Studio with Law, Prosperity, and Power models for U.S. Court House, Philadelphia, 1880.



The Minute Man

IN THE SMALL TOWN OF CONCORD, Massachusetts, stands a statue of a Revolutionary War soldier that has become one of the greatest icons of American art. In 1872, a committee of citizens awarded a commission to create



a monument commemorating the battle at the North Bridge to promising local sculptor Dan French. French had never executed a full-sized figure. Jumping at the opportunity, he agreed to do the job at cost.

On the 100th anniversary of the battle, April 19, 1875, a large crowd that included President Grant and Ralph Waldo Emerson gathered to view the unveiling of *The Minute Man*. When the flags draping the sculpture were pulled away, the crowd saw a farmer-soldier inspired by the art of antiquity and imbued with the energy of a new country. The young sculptor was not present; he had set off to study in Europe.



Dan French, Florence, 1875-76. Fresh from completing his first commission, French went to Italy to stay with the family of another sculptor, Preston Powers. French drank in the wonders of Florence-Roman and Greek art as well as that of the Italian Renaissance.

The Continents

AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY, the imposing United States Custom House was at the crossroads of the world and dominated the surrounding landscape. Sited at the lower end of Manhattan, the U. S. Custom House (1900-07) symbolized the nation's emerging power and global influence.



1976 Bernice Cluff, photographer

Africa,
UNITED STATES
CUSTOM HOUSE
1903-07

Architect Cass Gilbert commissioned Daniel Chester French to create four large sculptural groups depicting the continents: *Asia, Africa, Europe, and America*. Each sculpture is a composite of images that evoke its past and present and sometimes its future. In Gilbert's words, "*Africa* represents the sleeping continent, somnolent in every line of her figure." Although it embodies the cultural bias and ethnic stereotypes shared by most Americans of the time, *The Continents* is a remarkable achievement and reflects the aspirations of the United States at the dawn of the 20th century.



Carol M. Highsmith, photographer

French's Continents were intended to make a striking impression on the crowds of people who passed within the building's shadow each day.



THE *Samuel F. Dupont* MEMORIAL

IN 1882, CONGRESS AUTHORIZED THE creation of a statue honoring Civil War Admiral Samuel du Pont to be located in a newly-fashionable neighborhood in the District of Columbia, not far from the White House.



HEAD OF *Sea*,
PLASTER WORKING
MODEL, 1918

The du Pont family, however, never liked the statue. In 1917, in keeping with changing aesthetics, they contracted with French to replace the statue with a more "artistic" memorial.

French must have found the request to design a replacement for a portrait statue particularly appealing, as he believed that for most memorials, symbolism was preferable to realistic portraiture. *The Dupont Memorial*, with its graceful allegorical figures of *Wind*, *Sky*, and *Sea* harmonized with the neighborhood's elegant mansions. And, unlike the portrait statue, it was equally striking when approached by any of the eight streets that converge on the circle.



Carol M. Highsmith, photographer

Dupont Circle, Washington, D.C.

The Lincoln Memorial

EACH YEAR, OVER FOUR MILLION visitors make the pilgrimage to *The Lincoln Memorial*. There, they confront an enormous seated marble figure who radiates dignity and wisdom.



DETAIL OF
Abraham Lincoln
IN THE MEMORIAL

While the memorial was under construction, French brought colossal photographic enlargements to the site and with the architect, Henry Bacon, decided on nineteen feet as the appropriate height. He made final corrections on the seven-foot model before it was sent to the Piccirilli brothers for carving twenty-eight blocks of Georgia marble during the next year.

The Lincoln Memorial was dedicated on May 30, 1922. When Daniel Chester French began his life as a sculptor, the famous American monuments were portrait figures and equestrian statues, installed in parks and the rotundas of public buildings. *The Lincoln Memorial*,

executed at the end of his career, reflects the expansion of the role of the artist and architect. They had become dramatists of the nation's core meaning, its most basic values, commitments, and memories.



Underwood & Underwood, New York

D.C. French in his Chesterwood Studio beside the plaster final model of Abraham Lincoln, 1925.



"I spend six months of the year up there. . . That is heaven; New York is—well, New York." DANIEL CHESTER FRENCH

CHESTERWOOD

French was initially attracted by the beauty of the Housatonic River Valley and the view of Monument Mountain. In 1901, the Frenches moved into a new house designed by the architect Henry Bacon.

Bacon's stucco "villa" was both thoroughly modern and eclectic, with elements of old New England and of Italy. Bacon also designed the spectacular studio in 1898. While Chesterwood became a "gentleman's estate," French maintained the productive farmland and took an active part in its cultivation. When the sculptor died in 1931, his daughter Margaret French Cresson inherited the property and gave it to the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1969.



Ron Bunt, photographer

CHESTERWOOD
STUDIO

To learn more about Daniel Chester French, visit Chesterwood's website at

WWW.CHESTERWOOD.ORG.

Also, search the Smithsonian's Art Inventories at

WWW.SIRIS.SI.EDU and the

SOS! Save Outdoor Sculpture! website at

WWW.HERITAGEPRESERVATION.ORG.

4 Williamsville Rd.

P.O. Box 827

Stockbridge, MA 01262-0827

p.(413)298-3579 f.(413)298-3973

WWW.CHESTERWOOD.ORG

HOURS

May 1 - October 31

Open daily, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

EXHIBIT SPONSORS

Anonymous (2)

Fitzpatrick Family

Henry Luce Foundation

National Endowment for the Arts

National Endowment for the Humanities



ALL IMAGES CHESTERWOOD ARCHIVES UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

Rev'd. 7/2003

DANIEL CHESTER FRENCH (1850-1931)

■ 21 ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Signed *D.C. FRENCH* and dated *Jan. 1911*; also inscribed *GORHAM Co. Founders QZG*

Bronze, brown patina

Height: $37\frac{3}{4}$ inches
95.8 cm.

Note: This bronze is a cast of the working model for the original heroic size standing figure of Abraham Lincoln executed for Lincoln, Nebraska in 1912.

Provenance

James Graham & Sons, New York

Literature

Adams, Adeline, *Daniel Chester French, Sculptor* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1932), opp. p. 40, illus., *cf.*

Craven, Wayne, *Sculpture in America* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1968), p. 402

Dodd, Loring Holmes, *The Golden Age of American Sculpture* (Boston: Mount Vernon Press, 1936), p. 37, illus., *cf.*

[See illustration]



Price List

In this sale the following lots were sold at the prices stated. Lot numbers which are omitted represent items which were withdrawn, passed, or unsold. NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR TYPOGRAPHICAL ERRORS OR OMISSIONS

SALE NUMBER 3802

IMPORTANT 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN PAINTINGS AND BRONZES

From the Collection of the Late Geraldine Rockefeller Dodge

Friday, October 31, 1975 at 2:00 p.m.

1	7,000.00	23	1,700.00	45	15,000.00
2	3,000.00	24	450.00	46	9,500.00
3	4,000.00	25	1,600.00	47	12,500.00
4	5,000.00	26	1,900.00	48	8,500.00
5	1,000.00	27	1,800.00	49	5,500.00
6	800.00	28	10,000.00	50	11,000.00
7	8,000.00	29	5,750.00	51	5,250.00
8	2,500.00	30	115,000.00	52	4,000.00
9	5,500.00	31	1,900.00	53	21,000.00
10	5,000.00	32	1,600.00	54	10,000.00
11	850.00	33	1,600.00	55	16,000.00
12	45,000.00	34	2,700.00	56	16,000.00
13	4,200.00	35	2,700.00	57	9,000.00
14	4,500.00	36	9,500.00	58	43,000.00
15	4,000.00	37	6,000.00	59	4,000.00
16	7,500.00	38	4,000.00	60	1,700.00
17	3,100.00	39	11,000.00	61	3,500.00
18	5,000.00	40	1,300.00	62	9,500.00
19	40,000.00	41	3,250.00	63	9,500.00
20	11,000.00	42	11,000.00	64	4,000.00
21	18,000.00	43	7,500.00	65	18,000.00
22	1,500.00	44	15,500.00	66	7,000.00

Sotheby Parke Bernet Inc.

Telephone (212) 472-3400
Telex 232643
telegram: PARKGAL NEWYORK

The largest firm of art auctioneers in the world — founded 1744
980 MADISON AVENUE • NEW YORK 10021

Affiliated Company:
Sotheby Parke Bernet London
34/35 New Bond Street, London

Amsterdam / Boston / Edinburgh / Florence / Houston / Johannesburg / Los Angeles / Milan / Madrid / Melbourne / Munich / Paris / Rio de Janeiro / Toronto / Zurich

Sculpture Review

Spring 1994, Volume XLIII, No. 1, US \$4.95 Canada \$5.95



Daniel Chester French's *Republic*

1893, 1918 and 1993

by Michael Richman



Daniel Chester French standing by the "Republic," 1892.

As the celebration of the National Sculpture Society's centennial year draws to a close, it might well be considered that the Society's genesis, while it was officially launched on May 30, 1893, may well have been conceived on March 25, 1893, at the Madison Square Garden banquet honoring Daniel Hudson Burnham, the chief of construction of the World's Columbian Exposition. The guest list for that event included many of the men who would meet a few weeks later to form the Society.

It is little known that the principal sculptural decoration in the Garden's ballroom, as it was in the Court of Honor at the Chicago Exposition, was Daniel Chester French's *Republic* — as a 12-foot plaster model (at the former) and as the 65-foot gilded staff [reinforced-plaster] statue (at the latter). At the time of the fair's dedication on October 22, 1892, and its opening to the public on May 1, 1893, the *Republic* was the largest American sculpture, superseded only by Bartholdi's *Statue of Liberty*, its obvious iconic antecedent.

It may well have been Augustus Saint-Gaudens, the lone sculptor at the first Chicago planning meeting on January 10, 1891 (where he made the now-famous remark that this was the greatest meeting of artists since the fifteenth century) who, declining to par-

ticipate in the decorative program, suggested Frederick MacMonnies and French. On July 3, 1891, fair officials signed a contract with Saint-Gaudens for \$6,000 to serve as advisor to the two sculptors in order that "these important figures will have {your} supervision and care, and that in this much at least we are to have your help."¹

The contract with French to make a 12-foot model of the *Republic* was signed on July 27, 1891, with \$3,000 to be paid for this study and \$15,000 to superintend the enlargement. French was not restricted as to where he was to make his model, only that he was responsible for shipping and delivery on April 1, 1892. French was invited to make the initial maquette at Saint-Gaudens' summer studio in Cornish, New Hampshire, during August and September. He wrote his brother, William Merchant Richardson French, on September 19:

*Well, I just guess you and all the rest will have something to say about the Republic when you see it, if the present design by French, improved by St. G., [painter Thomas] Dewing, [Herbert] Adams & etc. is carried out and gilded. St. G. thinks it a buster. I think the ultra artists may like it, but I have my doubts about the populi. When I have it photographed I will remember you.*²

He made the working model, approximately 3 feet in height, in Paris, during the fall and winter of 1891-92. French wrote from Paris to his brother:

I send you a photograph of the Republic and I wonder what you will think of it. Is it too archaic for you? I fear it will be a good deal criticized but I intend to make it respected. I modeled a more sympathetic figure with extended arms as if welcoming the nations, but we all decided that a more conventional thing would be better and this symmetrical composition was the result. Its great size and its position, it seems to me, call for this sort of thing. I may give her a halo of stars {electric lights} and of course, the details will be subject to change. I shall ask you not to show the picture to anybody but Alice and Henry {wife and child} as I am anxious to keep it out of the papers.³

This second-stage model was delivered in Chicago personally by the sculptor on February 12, 1892, as Burnham, feeling the pressure of the October dedication deadline, ordered French to cut short his Parisian trip. In the Forestry Building, French worked on the third stage, the full-scale model, which was completed by May of 1892.

Work on the 65-foot reinforced-plaster figure began immediately, with French now being helped by Edward Clark Potter and a cadre of assistants and apprentices. The figure, enlarged in five main sections, was completed at a rapid pace, with the first section set on the pedestal by July 21 and the last on November 7, 1892.

From the outset, the *Republic* was to be gilded, but it was not until the spring of 1893 that the operation was performed:

The Republic is being covered with fine gold — real gold leaf — and will burst from her chrysalis the last of the week. I climbed to her head today. You never saw such a mass of gold. She will be splendid as a spot in a picture if in no other way.⁴

The *Republic*, with its internal wood armature, containing a narrow stairway that permitted passage to the head — and resting on a 35-foot pedestal designed by Charles Atwood, the fair's chief designer — was the commanding symbol of the dream city

in the reclaimed lands of Jackson Park, on the shores of Lake Michigan. The large *Republic* remained in place until it was set on fire and destroyed on August 28, 1896.

The Working Model of the *Republic*
French made an "insurance" plaster of the 12-foot figure in the spring of 1892. This was used for the Burnham dinner, where French reported:

My statue occupied the center of one end of the hall behind the chairman {Burnham}. It received more and higher compliments than I could repeat. I am a good deal surprised at its popularity. The dinner was a late one and I did not get to bed till after three.⁵

The plaster was returned to Chicago, and after the fair closed, many of the 1/6-scale working models produced by different sculptors were transferred to the Field Columbian Museum — the granite structure built on the lagoon at Jackson Park by Charles B. Atwood to house the fair's Fine Arts Palace.

In January 1896, French requested that his brother, the director of the Art Institute of Chicago, oversee the making of two duplicate casts. When the casting work was completed by late February, one plaster was given to the Art Institute for display (it has not survived). The other plaster was sent to French's studio at 125 West Eleventh Street, New York City.

French received a commission from Messrs. Siegel and Cooper (their department store was located on Sixth Avenue, between 18th and 19th streets) in late 1895. Although the store was officially opened on March 30, 1896, the sculpture cast by the Henry-Bonnard Bronze Company was not placed until the summer. French made several modifications — substitution of a wreath emblem for the liberty cap on the staff, elimination of the eagle and globe, and incorporation of marble arms, face and toes.

Set on the ground floor of the building that was known as the "Big Store", the *Republic* became a New York City landmark, standing in a 70-foot-wide fountain that inspired the refrain "Meet

*"The Republic
received more and higher
compliments
than I could repeat.
I am a good deal
surprised at its popularity."*

— Daniel Chester French

me at the fountain." In 1918, French repurchased the statue when the department store went out of business — paying the owners an amount equal to the original casting, carving and gilding (\$3,822.00). It was stored at the Piccirilli Brothers yards until it was sold by the sculptor's daughter, Margaret French Cresson, to Forest Lawn Cemetery, Hollywood Hills, California in 1955.

The Republic in Jackson Park

The establishment of the Benjamin F. Ferguson Bequest in 1905 was a promising development for Chicago public sculpture. It was stipulated that when the fund's endowment reached \$1,000,000, accumulated interest was to be used for commissioning and maintaining sculpture. Lorado Taft's Fountain of the Great Lakes was the first Ferguson Fund monument to be ordered; it was placed adjacent to the Michigan Avenue facade of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1913. The second work erected under the terms of the bequest was the reduced-size, 24-foot statue of the Republic, completed five years later.

The official Exposition did not disband as a business organization until September 1915, when the \$48,000 that remained in the treasury was transferred to the Ferguson Fund of the Art.

A determination about how those funds were to be spent might well have been under discussion by the surviving members of the fair's board three years earlier with a novel idea — remake the original *Republic*. A cautious French responded to his friend Charles Hutchinson on December 19, 1912, reporting that one foundry had indicated that casting a 65-foot bronze might cost between \$150,000 and \$200,000, exclusive of the architect's fee, sculptor's compensation and pedestal construction. French may well have planted the idea of making a statue at 20 or 30 feet.

If further negotiations continued after this time, no record of them has survived. But the fair officials did propose and complete one project. The bronze casting of French's *Indian Corn*

and *Wheat* groups were placed in Chicago's Garfield Park. A disgruntled French queried his friend's scheme:

In a clipping from the Chicago Post of July 9, I notice that they say that two groups of bulls, with attendant figures, which Potter and I made for the World's Fair, are being cast in bronze.... This is news to me. Is it true or is it only a newspaper story. I think Potter and I would have felt that we wanted to do something to those groups before they were put into imperishable, and perhaps it is not too late now. I hardly like to have my World's Fair work, which was necessarily done under pressure and in haste, go down to posterity, but if the work is already underway I shall not enter any protest.⁶

How Hutchinson responded to his friend's complaint is not known, but by the spring of 1915, French learned that Hutchinson and his colleagues were eager to proceed with the Jackson Park proposal. Confirming his willingness to come to Chicago, French wrote Hutchinson:

If it should be found necessary to cut down the expense for want of money, the sculptor would probably reduce his margin of safety and profit to meet demands. It might also be possible to have a less expensive pedestal. I am very much interested to have the statue erected and ready to make concessions within reason.⁷


After the Chicago clients agreed officially to proceed on August 12, 1915, French reported that he and Bacon had determined that the size should be 24 feet. A contract was signed on September 22 that called for the statue to be completed and set in place by November 1, 1916. It was a tight schedule that would not be met.

The statue finally arrived on April 3, 1918, and subsequently was erected on the site that originally had been occupied by Richard Morris Hunt's high-domed Administration Building, at the west end of the Court of Honor. It was dedicated on May 11, 1918, marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of the fair's opening.

Regilding an American Landmark

After years of neglect, a regilding effort in 1957 and remedial work in 1973, the city fathers decided to refurbish the Republic as part of Chicago's one-hundredth anniversary celebration of the fair. This became a collaborative project with the Conservation Department of the Art Institute represented by Barbara Hall, the Chicago Park District (Andrej Dajnowski) and Gold Leaf Studios of Washington, D.C. (William Adair). During August and early September of 1992, a covered scaffold tower was erected and the surface of the statue was cleaned with a mixture of calcium carbonate and walnut shells at 100/120 psi, given a hot-water wash; and covered with BTA.

The gilding work began on September 16, 1992, with the application of two coatings of Inralac and one of yellow "size" — an essential primer for the gold leaf. With the last of an incredible 24,500 sheets of gold leaf were applied eight days later on September 24. A rededication ceremony was held on October 22.

Today, the rejuvenated *Republic* now begins her 75th year as the triumphal marker of the World's Fair in the history of Chicago and as a personification of America's internationalism. While her accessories — the liberty cap (now replaced by a laurel wreath), the eagle on the globe, the breastplate and the sword — may be lost to many of today's viewers, the statue is the quintessential embodiment of Daniel Chester French's talents as an American symbol maker, at a time when figurative sculpture and public art were synonymous. 

1. D. H. Burnham to A. Saint-Gaudens, 22 June 1891, Augustus Saint-Gaudens Papers, Library of Congress, and Moore, Burnham, 47.
2. D. C. French to W.M.R. French, 29 September 1891, Daniel Chester French Family Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.
3. *Ibid.*, 29 November 1891.
4. Daniel Chester French to Pamela French, (his mother), 24 April 1893, French Papers.
5. *Ibid.*, 26 March 1893.
6. D. C. French to C. Hutchinson, 20 July 1914, French Papers.
7. *Ibid.*, 16 June, 1915.

FRENCH, DANIEL CHESTER

DRAWER 21a

SCULPTORS-F

